Medical Council of India is not sponsoring students after 1998 for admission to any medical institutions in erstwhile U.S.S.R.

(c) The students who have obtained recognised qualifications are eligible for registration with the Medical Council of India subject to provisions of Indian Medical Council Act, 1956. Also, it is proposed to introduce screening test for all Indian nationals holding foreign degrees for the purpose of registration by amending the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956.

BARC'S Funding of an Anti-Ageing Drug

463. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the Scientists of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai, have found that a herb, used in Ayurveda in Rasayana Preparations and as an anti-ageing drug, boosts the body's immune system to fight against infection called "Tinospara Cordifolia" and the plant is commonly known as Gulancha or Amriti giloe, is cultivated throughout India; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction on its extensive utilisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) The rest has revealed that extract of this plant contains an active principle which enhances the immune response.

(b) The Government has applied for patent (no. 56/BOM/98) titled, "A process for preparation of an immunomodulator from the ayurvedic medicinal plant, Gulvel (Tinospora sp)". This has been accepted by the Dy. Controller of Patents and Designs, Mumbai.

Spread of Japanese Encephalitis

464. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH "SURYA": Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that children are dying/have died of Japanese encephalitis in certain parts of the country;

(b) if so, what is the number of dead and those suffering from it; and

(c) what are the preventive measures, if any taken to control the disease from spreading to other areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) and (b) Japanese Encephalitis affects both adults and children. As per reports received from the State Governments, 2090 cases with 507 deaths were recorded during 1998. During 1999, 1471 cases with 287 deaths due to suspected Japanese Encephalitis (JE) have been reported till October.